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ABSTRACT

The technical report presents a chapter outline and thesis summary of an investigation of social science research institutes in American universities. The bulk of the report presents the thesis in four sections. Section I proposes a typology of organized social research units (OSRUs) in the 11 universities studied. Dimensions used to classify the OSRUs are location, type of program, program orientation, and organizational unit. The second section summarizes the thesis: that OSRUs represent the embodiment of research function in the quality university, a reduction in time devoted by social science faculty to teaching, and an increase in the research effort of academic social scientists. The third section summarizes constraints inherent in the university context which face any effort to develop OSRUs, such as administrative policies, organization of OSRUs, choice of director, and recruitment of staff. The final section summarizes requirements for the creation and operation of successful OSRUs. Requirements include developing a power base which enables the unit to be self-sustaining and an image as an organization which consistently produces high quality research, financial support, leadership, and good management. The OSRUs should also be located near other researchers. (Author/DB)

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FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT
November 17, 1976

NIE GRANT NE-G-00-3-0024

"SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN THE QUALITY AMERICAN UNIVERSITY"

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I. OVERVIEW

This is the final technical report for NIE Grant Number NE-G-00-0024, Project Number 3-0928. This report consists of a chapter outline and a summary of the major thesis.

The main difference between this report and that of September 22, 1975, is that the chapter outline reflects a decision to organize the body of the report in terms of types of organized social research units rather than in terms of the individual universities and individual OSRU which were intensively studied. This is a logical extension of the decision to classify OSRU. The decision to classify OSRU followed from the recognition that the OSRU in the universities studied constituted a universe of great diversity. A second difference is that the outline for each chapter is more detailed than it was for the previous report. This greater detail does not alter the summary of the major thesis.

Detailed presentation of the final argument is not yet complete. Although not ready for submition with this report, the detailed results of this project should ultimately become available to the interested audiences through publication in academic and other journals.

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II. PROPOSED OUTLINE FOR COMPLETED PROJECT

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Sections 1 and 2 of this chapter are the same as Sections 1 and 2 of the preceeding chapter (B). Section 3 differs from Section 3 of the preceeding chapter as follows:

3. Autonomy, Change, and Uses Viewed Through Autonomous Professional School OSRU Focused on Social Problems
a. Autonomy
1. These OSRU and Their University Environments
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(b) Congruence between goals of such OSRU and their parent schools
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II. PROPOSED OUTLINE FOR COMPLETED PROJECT (cont)

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Sections 1 and 2 of this chapter outline are the same as Sections 1 and 2 of the preceeding chapter (B) outline. Section 3 differs from Section 3 of the preceeding chapter as follows:

3. Autonomy, Changes, and Uses Viewed Through Independent Autonomous Interdisciplinary Units

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Sections 1 and 2 of this chapter outline are the same as Sections 1 and 2 of the preceeding chapter outline (B). Section 3 differs from Section 3 of that chapter outline as follows:

3. Autonomy, Change, Uses Viewed Through Independent Autonomous Problem-Focused OSRU

a. Autonomy
1. These OSRU and Their University Environments
(a) The importance of university policy
(b) The importance of established intellectual-budgetary jurisdictions and their incentives

II. PROPOSED OUTLINE FOR COMPLETED PROJECT (cont)

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(c) Disciplinary to interdisciplinary modes of research
(d) Disciplinary/professional field to problem-focused levels of abstraction

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III. THESIS

A. Overview:

The first section proposes a typology of organized social research units in the university. The second section summarizes the over-all thesis. The third section summarizes constraints inherent in the university context which face any effort to develop organized social research units. It stresses the difficulties which face free-standing, autonomous, social-problem-oriented units as these are the types which seem to offer the greatest potential for change in the university and thus reveal most clearly the operating dynamics of the university environment. The final section summarizes requirements for the creation and operation of successful units of this type.

B. Typology of Organized Social Research Units in Quality Universities

1. Organized social research units (OSRUs) in the eight universities studied extensively and in the three studied more intensively constitute a universe of great diversity. This diversity is important because it influences efforts to generalize about these types of university units. Therefore, a provisional classification is needed. All the OSRUs in the universities studied in this project will be classed in terms of the following dimensions:

2. Location: Units are found in different administrative locations in the university. The key elements here are administrative overview and budgetary placement. Four locations are possible: in departments, in professional schools, free-standing, and on the border of the university. Departmental and professional school OSRUs are responsible to the chief administrative officers of those units and are carried on the budgets of those units. Free-standing units have independent budgetary status and report to academic administrators higher than professional school or departmental chief administrators. OSRU units on the border of the university are not administered by the university administration for purposes of personnel, fiscal, or extramurally funded project management, although the university may contribute money to them, or vice-versa, and though they may have intimate intellectual relationships with members of departmental units in the university on the borders of which they fall.

3. Facilitative/Autonomous Programs: Within the various possible locations in the university, different types of units are possible. A distinction can be made between units with programs which are facilitative and those which are autonomous. A facilitative program is one which is designed primarily to further the purposes of affiliated faculty by providing an administrative-budgetary context in which support services necessary for carrying on research can be offered to them, without at the same time furthering substantive purposes of its own which are predetermined and defined independently of purposes of individual members. An autonomous program, on the other hand, is one which is not simply the expression of the combined research interests of affiliated faculty at any point in time.

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4. Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary/Social Problem - Oriented Programs: This distinction is between activities that every practitioner can recognize as disciplinary, interdisciplinary (but still "academic"), or social problem-oriented. This distinction is not without ambiguity. The ambiguity inheres in the social problem category. In sociological writings on the utilization of research a distinction is usually made between applied and theoretical research, or disciplinary and problem-oriented work. Often it is indeed the case that a distinction between problem-oriented and disciplinary work can readily be made. However, if one reflects on the fact that the elements of a social problem or the needs of research using agencies are manifold, then it becomes obvious immediately that in many cases disciplinary research is perfectly useful and therefore might be considered both disciplinary and problem oriented. Nevertheless, this distinction will be employed for the moment.

5. The results of this set of distinctions are the following types of organized social research units in universities:

a. Professional school units: It is assumed here that professional school units are oriented toward the intellectual and practical concerns of the professional schools, although in terms of those interests they may be facilitative or autonomous. Thus:

1) Autonomous, social problem-oriented units

2) Facilitative, social problem-oriented units

b. Departmental Units: The programs of departmental units are probably disciplinary. However, it is not inconceivable that some individuals may be working in new or fringe areas of departmental concerns which are difficult to distinguish from interdisciplinary work. Furthermore, it is the case that in most disciplines there are clearly discernable social problem oriented segments. Thus:

	Autonomous	Facilitative
Disciplinary		
Inter-Disciplinary		
Social Problem Oriented		

c. Free-standing Units: For purposes of this study, the free-standing units with interdisciplinary and social problem oriented programs are, potentially, the most interesting of the organized social research units. And of these two types (or four types, if you prefer), it is the autonomous social problem oriented units which are the most interesting. In some cases, such units represent departures from traditional academic goals, organization and administration of some magnitude. Such units can be normatively relatively well-integrated around programmatic objectives. Members can become more committed to the units and its personnel and goals than to any other campus units. There can be relatively hierarchical authority relationships, at least in the self-conscious allocation of funds and other resources, by unit leadership, among affiliated staff. There can be relatively tightly organized, multi-member projects with clear-cut divisions of a kind not typically found in professional schools and departments (this statement applies to faculty members).

	Autonomous	Facilitative
Disciplinary		
Interdisciplinary		
Social Problem Oriented		

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d. Units on the Border: For the most part, organized social research units on the university's border are probably uniformly autonomous and social-problem oriented. Such units are not without interest because they enable one to understand the intellectual boundaries established by the university of which they are a part, and enable one to understand the forces playing on universities which lead to their creation. Often they develop either outside the administrative purview of the university administration or end up there after being created as integral units.

None of the following assertions apply to organized social research units on the university border.

In addition, it is primarily the free-standing, autonomous, social-problem oriented units which are at the focus of the ensuing discussion. It should be clear from the context just which types of OSRUs are being referred to in what follows.

C. The General Thesis

Organized social research units in the quality American university occupy a paradoxical position. Considered historically, over the whole period from around 1915 to 1970, they represent the administrative embodiment of the research function in the quality university. As such, they represent an increase in the research effort of academic social scientists, and represent also a reduction in the time devoted by social scientist faculty to teaching. It is perfectly clear also, however, that, both as a matter of university policy, and as a result of the internal operating dynamic of universities and of social science disciplines, they are distinctly subordinate in importance to departments and professional schools, and generally do not represent departures from traditional academic administrative and organizational patterns, or programmatic interests. This reservation applies to

all types of organized social research units, but is more important for free-standing, autonomous OSRUs than it is for free-standing facilitative units, or for either departmental or professio nal school units. Some free-standing, autonomous OSRUs may represent innovative mutations in the internal life of universities and in their relations with "outside" organizations, but as a general rule the obstacles to creation and operation of such units are too difficult to overcome. Successful cases therefore become interesting for the lessons they can provide in the way universities and social science disciplines (as social systems) operate. Finally, it is perfectly clear that, whatever the seductive force of outside monies and outside opportunities, the most powerful forces at work in universities are centripetal - those of institutional maintenance.

D. The Importance of OSRUs:

The remarks in this paragraph apply to all types of OSRUs. These units represent the embodiment of the research function in the university. They are invariably administrative-budgetary vehicles (and sometimes vital, integrated research work groups) for allocating and managing large amounts of extramural funds to salaries, technical support services, secretarial services, and the other requisites of empirical social research. Everywhere their primary purpose and raison d'etre is to foster and support research.

This is seen clearly enough in the contemporary period, but is seen even more clearly in the pre-World War II period back to 1915, when research was not as securely established as the primary function of university social scientists.

Contemporary writing of that period on university organized social research units always emphasized the desire, in creating such units, to upgrade and increase the amount of faculty effort devoted to research. Such units appear, during that period, to have been one vehicle used by research-minded faculty to free themselves from onerous teaching burdens in order to devote more time to research.

As the number of such units, the funds they controlled, and the number of affiliated faculty members has increased, so has the faculty effort devoted to teaching declined, where "effort devoted to teaching" means the contractually stipulated course load of the affiliated faculty member. The administrative practice which links this growth in research administered through such units with reduction in time allocated to courses taught by faculty is "released time from teaching", whereby affiliation with an organized social research unit automatically releases one from a portion of the contractually agreed on teaching obligation.

Thus, in OSRUs one sees that the research concerns of faculty andadministrators, aided by increases in outside monies has increased significantly the research effort of faculty and has changed over a considerable period of time the balance between teaching and research.* Thus, such units are the expression of significant forces at work in the life of the quality university over the period in question.

In addition, there are cases in which university OSRUs of the free-standing, autonomous kind represent important, innovative mutations in the internal life of the parent university.

*This argument has been developed by Robert Nisbet in Degradation of the Academic Dogma (1970)

However, generally, even where such is the goal of a particular unit, the obstacles to accomplishment of this which are inherent in the university are too great to overcome.

E. Constraints on the Position of Organized Social Research Units in the University

1. The operation of these units (OSRUs) is constrained by university policy, and as a result of the internal operating dynamic of universities and the social science disciplines. They are reduced by university policy to a decidedly secondary role to the departments and the professional schools, and must, furthermore, contend with the existing constellation of power represented by departments and professional schools, and their monopolization of the incentives critical to those making careers as social scientists.

2. Constraints and Types of OSRU: The importance of such constraints varies with the different types of OSRU. Such constraints are not particularly important for facilitative units, regardless of their location, because they are intended to, and do, complement research in the existing research work areas of the university. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that facilitative units fit most easily into a university context. Essentially, such units are simply bundles of research support services which help increase the research production of the faculty and have no discrete programmatic goals of their own.

Such constraints are important, but still not critical for departmental and professional school autonomous units. Such units do not appear to conflict with programmatic, administrative, and organizational patterns which generally exist in departments and professional schools. In particular instances, of course, such units in departments and professional schools can create

problems and encounter obstacles when they try to be innovative, but generally these are of a different order than those encountered by free-standing, autonomous units.

Such constraints are most important for the free-standing, autonomous OSRU, severly circumscribing the degree to which they can accomplish the innovative programmatic purposes for which, as a general rule, they are created. Nevertheless, there are instances of free-standing, autonomous units which are successful. The conditions which facilitate this success can be seen through a consideration of successful cases.

3. Constraints Posed by University Policy:

a. These remarks apply to free-standing, autonomous, OSRUs. What is not often emphasized in writings on organized social research units, although it is perfectly obvious, is that the university, as a matter of self-conscious policy, refuses to allocate to such units the material or symbolic resources which are critical to making a career as a social scientist, and thus to the success of such units. None of the three universities studied intensively for this project granted the right to (1) recruit faculty to the tenure track, (2) establish basic salaries, (3) promote through ranks to tenure, or (4) make the basic decisions on salary increments.

Furthermore, with but minor exceptions, in the three universities studied members of organized social research units must be faculty members in departmental or professional school units of the university.

The view taken here is that these constraints imposed by university policy are every bit as important as the disciplinary conservatism usually cited as the primary reason why social scientists tend to work in traditional disciplinary modes. In fact, it is the university as an organization

which provides the material and institutional basis for organized social research and through the decisions just listed makes it possible for certain constellations of concepts, skills, and interests to survive and flourish while others cannot become securely established.

Everywhere, furthermore, such units are supported by extramural funds and practically never by the university's "hard" funds. Universities will provide "start-up" monies on occassion, but generally this is paid back, as intended, many times over by outside funds. But this means that work in the program areas represented by organized social research units is generally undependably supported over the relatively long periods of time necessary to develop a particular field of endeavor with all that this means in terms of conceptual innovations, cumulation of research findings, recruitment of new workers, and so on.

b. The basic justification for this policy is to be found in the fact that the university must make, in its tenure decisions, and also in its broader developmental decisions, very long-term commitments of precious resources. Such commitments, it should be noted, are not only to individuals, but are also to the conceptual constrellations in different fields, sub-fields, and research work areas which in turn are housed in departments, professional schools, and organized research units. Conservatism in such decisions is widely felt by university administrators to be the wisest policy. The most sagacious administrators are acutely conscious of the rapidity with which faculty quality can decline, and the energies and resources of the university be drawn off into preoccupations which soon enough are shown to be sterile, or do not seem to be in keeping with a universities primary responsibility to produce fundamental knowledge and understanding. Thus, com-

mitment of resources to a particular research work area will not be made until the intellectual foundations of a research work area are securely established. The competitive situation in which quality universities find themselves certainly encourages such a conservative stance. But beyond this, the very nature of intellectual work, with its slow cumulation of reliable knowledge, and difficult establishment of reliable critical standards, demands prudential, conservative investment decisions. Another way of saying this is that the most reliable critical judgements are those made collectively by a large number of workers in a particular field over relatively long periods of time. Investment of university resources, symbolic and material, cannot be, and should not be, made until the collective critical intelligence has been able to judge the results of work in a particular area. At that point, investments can be safely made in tenure positions, creation of new units backed by university resources, or broad areas of intellectual work in which the university wants to develop (Asian studies as opposed to African studies, for instance).

C. It should be noted, <u>en passant</u>, that many university organized social research units are seen by university administrators (and faculty) as vehicles through which outside funds can be generated for activities already being undertaken in the university or for new departures which cannot be undertaken without such funds. In extreme cases, this represents a cynical decision to "repackage" existing activities to appeal to new funding areas. It is widely felt that outside, particularly government, funders prefer to invest money in separate administrative-budgetary structures. Thus, at this extreme, such units are an organizational coping device self-consciously used by university administrators and faculty to

support endogenously generated developmental goals by tapping into rapidly changing funding markets through presentation of whatever guise seems necessary to shake loose sufficient funds. There are, of course, always justifications for so preceeding. Many administrators and faculty, thinking along the lines outlined above in the preceeding paragraph, mistrust the fickle movement of outside, particularly government, funding. Realizing that sound intellectual development requires time, painstaking effort, and many dead-ends, they are unwilling to readily follow the lead of government agencies the goals of which will change with the next administration, or perhaps even with the next research director.

4. Constraints Inherent in Operating Dynamics of Universities and Disciplines

a. Administration: The administrative framework of the university may, or may not, seriously constrain the development followed by OSRUs. Although it is not possible to generalize at this stage in this project, it is clear that university administration bears on the OSRUs from creation, through recruitment of staff, to administrative review of extramural research projects.

1) Organization of OSRUs: The creation of an organized social research unit is generally the work of a committee, often headed by an administrative officer, and generally a number of senior faculty members representing a broad range of viewpoints and interests. In such circumstances it is difficult to organize radical departures.

2) Choice of Director and Recruitment of Staff: Clearly one critical choice is that of director of an OSRU. This decision is generally taken

by committee, sometimes including administrative officers. Because such committees tend to represent a diversity of viewpoints and interests they tend to take conservative decisions. That is to say, any director chosen by a broad-gauged committee will tend to be chosen to satisfy a diversity of viewpoints.

Recruitment of staff generally must also be reviewed by academic administration. This is taken up again shortly, because it is the departments which seem to be critical here.

3) Administrative Review of Extramurally Funded Projects: At this point, it appears that in the three universities studied here administrative review does not seriously constrain the substantive content of research projects which pass through the review process to outside agencies.

Only at one university was there some indication that occassionally offices participating in this review process would bring to bear broader institutional criteria and either refuse to authorize prosecution of the project under university auspices or return a proposal for alternation. In these cases, the particular projects involved appeared to have a too applied or action-oriented component to be undertake with university sponsorship.

4) In sum, the university has at these critical points the administrative machinery to closely circumscribe the development and operation of OSRUs should it want to.

b. Career Patterns, Incentives, Staffing

1) Career Patterns: Certain rather common-place and simplistic observations are necessary at this juncture. To begin with, certain imperatives or constants shape the professional careers of social scientists.

Achievement in social research requires a commitment of many years, not only for training, but also for even modest research accomplishments. Careers are possible only when an institutional environment which offers long-term and reliable support, maintenance, and the apparatus necessary to allocate rewards, is available. Although social scientists are found in non-academic contexts, it is still the case that universities provide the major institutional framework within which social research careers for PhD social scientists can be made.*

Two components of this institutional framework should be discussed here: (1) individual universities and the material and symbolic resources they provide in support of research careers, and (2) a system of universities which together provide a stable institutional environment for a large community of researchers.

With regard to (1), the critical feature is an administrative-intellectual context within which a group of peers can confer on individuals the rights, privileges and rewards which enable them to pursue scholarly interests in a stable context.

*It may be that social science research careers can be made in the non-academic sector - in government and in private profit and non-profit research corporations. Many social scientists do work in these contexts. As far as I know, little is known about social science career patterns in these sectors. I shall assume for purposes of this project that, although work opportunities are available for social scientists in non-academic contexts, it is doubtful whether stable careers leading to research accomplishment deemed important by the general social science community are possible for any large number of people. Even assuming this assumption is correct, it is undoubtedly true that the situation is rapidly changing.

The critical decision is that to award tenure.

The wider social science communities spread throughout a large number of universities makes regular judgements about the value of particular individual accomplishments which in turn influence the judgements of those groups of individuals in particular universities who decide to confer the universities' rewards on particular individuals. The existence of a large number of such university sub-divisions, in addition to supporting a large number of researchers, makes individual mobility possible, and thus articulation of individual interests and capabilities with the needs, interests, and capabilities of different institutions.

2) Incentives: The incentives academic social scientists deem most important are: (1) basic salary and salary increments, (2) promotion through ranks to, (3) tenure.

As a result of policy decisions at the university-wide level, the right to allocate these values is vested in senior faculty of certain academic-administrative units of the university. Generally, for reasons outlined in V, E, 3, b, above, these are disciplinarily organized departments and professional schools. These rewards are the tangible and necessary requisites for a social science career. Access to positions providing these requisites are necessary is one is to have a stable, productive career in social research.

Nowhere do organized social research units have the right to confer these benefits on their affiliated members. The most important benefits which can be offered by an organized social research unit are: (1) released time from teaching, (2) summer salaries, (3) funds to defray research

expenses, (4) in some cases collegiality, an intangible, but important, resource, (5) access, in some cases, to data pools, (6) technical and secretarial support services. These are not insubstantial benefits. However, they are substantially less powerful as incentives than those controlled by the disciplinarily organized units of the university.

3) Staffing: The right to recruit faculty to the university is restricted to certain intellectual-administrative units, which have, generally, for reasons already outlined above, the characteristics of an already established discipline. Furthermore, it is generally university policy to restrict professional membership of organized social research units to faculty members.

I am aware that in some universities there are large numbers of research associates, often PhD holders, who are based in OSRUs, not departments or professional schools. In the three universities being studied intensively here there were some individuals in this category but not a large number. There are often individuals connected for short periods of time (up to two years), sometimes as post-doctoral fellows, sometimes as more senior people. But the basic situation is that the main staff of such units are also faculty members.

4) Staffing, Incentives, Career Patterns: Some Conclusions

(a) Monopolization by disciplinarily organized units of recruitment to the university of faculty members, and the condition that staff of OSRUs must be faculty members, means that the programs of such units are confined by the array of faculty interests available over a particular period of time on the particular campus involved.

(b) In like manner, until it is possible to make a career in universities in the areas favored by particular OSRUs the work of those units will be done in ways which allow the participating social scientists to advance in their careers within the administrative-intellectual jurisdictions which have to power to advance or retard those careers. In most cases this is the traditional disciplinary department.

((1)) Junior Faculty: This is emphatically the case for junior faculty. In their own universities, they must satisfy the critical judgement and taste of the senior faculty members which have the power to reward or withhold tenure. Among junior faculty interviewed for this project, several individuals felt it imperative to produce work which would be satisfactorily received by the departmental senior group. In so far as the programmatic goals of the ORSU with which they might be affiliated conflict with those of disciplinary departments, this category of faculty will not be able to effectively participate in the OSRU programs.

The problem forthis category of faculty extends beyond the confines of their own universities. If, for instance, they aee committed to working in an OSRU the organizing concept and programmatic thrust of which are unlike those of the traditional department with which they are affiliated, their inter-university mobility could be severly constrained. Although they might be able to find outlets for their work, the type of work might well be unacceptable to the disciplinary faculty which control access to the major market for social scientists. Their careers would immediately become more precarious. They would run the risk of cutting themselves off from the core of the academic

system and being relegated to units on the fringe of the quality university, to lower quality universities, or to falling completely outside the university system altogether.

((2)) Senior Faculty:

The major material incentives allocated by disciplinary departments would seem to play a smaller part in constraining the individual professional commitments of faculty members after those faculty members achieve tenure. Neverhheless, although there are examples of senior faculty members who have shifted orientations gradually or more quickly, the general impression developed over the course of interviews in this study is that such shifts away from disciplinary pathways are relatively rare.

Conceivably, salary increments, further promotion possibilities, peer esteem could all work to constrain development of novel, non-disciplinary orientations. It is difficult to argue with confidence at this juncture just what does indeed constrain this category of faculty. A tentative explanation might be hazardedat this point, however.

With regard to individual research commitments of senior faculty who may affiliate with a social research units, research directions may be constrained by the enertia of intellectual and career"capitalization." This metaphor refers to an individual's investment in acquisition of skills, in gaining knowledge in a particular area, in developing personal relationships in a field of endeavor, in achieving through well-received publication an audience and an authoritative position in a particular research community. The achievement of such a "critical mass" , if you will, in a professional life is generally difficult and takes a long period. A variety of opportunities and symbolic and material rewards follow from achievement of such a position. Transfer of such skills to new areas takes time and considerable

effort. In all, the intellectual side of research careers, as well as their social aspects, has a certain momentum in which risk-reward ratios are such that it is easier to continue elaborating a particular set of already developed research commitments than to develop anew a separate set of such commitments.

5. Constraints on the Operation of Organized Social Research Units: A Summary

Organized social research units in quality universities, taken together as a class without distinguishing among them, have been important, over the period from 1915 to 1970, as manifestations of forces which have escalated research as an activity to predominant importance in the university at the expense of teaching, where teaching is understood to mean the faculty contribution to class-room work. They have been important, also, through their own activities, in furthering this development.

But the research undertaken, if one focuses on OSRUs as a class without distinguishing among them, has generally been in disciplinary modes, or has followed the established interests of the professional schools in which such units occur, and thus has fostered the growth of the existing disciplinary and professional research constellations in the university. The research undertaken represents the interests and commitments of faculty dedicated to advancing the interests of particular disciplines or professions, and, understandably, of their own careers within these established frameworks.

Those efforts to develop new, practice-oriented research in free-standing, social problem-oriented research units have been undercut by powerful centripetal forces at work in the university. University policies, administrative practices, and the effect on incentives and sanctions established by these

policies and practices on career line possibilities place powerful obstacles in the way of efforts to create and operate OSRUs in non-disciplinary program areas.

These powerful forces conspire to prevent basic social-intellectual chang from occurring in those research contexts which are sometimes established to bring about such changes and in which one would expect to find such changes occuring. These are the free-standing, social problem-oriented units. By basic social-intellectual change is meant development of new, essentially non-disciplinary roles, strong loyalty to non-disciplinary research collectivieies and their goals, systematic development of practically-oriented research which may not be able to win respect from disciplinar-audiences, and establishment of concrete linkages around concrete research projects between researchers in university contexts and practitioners in non-university contexts.

This is not to say that OSRUs designed to develop non-disciplinary program areas cannot produce research of high-quality and practical worth. It is to say that these same obstacles make it extremely difficult to create and operate units of this type which are successful in these limited terms.

F. "Critical Mass" and Corporate Identity as Prerequisites for "Successful" Organized Social Research Units of the Free-Standing, Autonomous, Social Problem-Oriented Type:

1. Argument: The argument here is that successful research productivity depends on the ability of organized social research organizations in universities to develop a "critical mass" and a corporate identity perceived both in the university and outside it.

Totman

2. Comment: "Successful" here means the ability of units such as this to reliably produce research which falls within the programmatic definition of the unit and which is of high quality.

All such units must to some degree be opportunistic, and all will be limited in the degree to which they can depart from research which is of interest to established professional and disciplinary constellations on a particular campus. This is a consequence of the constraints inherent in the university setting which were discussed above.

The idea of corporate identity of a research unit is not original, although I cannot remember seeing it in published work. It is regularly mentioned by faculty when discussing the operation of such units. It refers, essentially, to the development of an organizational image or reputation as an organization which consistently produces high-quality research which transcends the image or reputation of a single individual affiliated with such units. Critical mass is also a concept which is not original here. Faculty members affiliated with such units refer to the critical mass necessary to develop a "self-sustaining" reaction, to continue the metaphor.

3. Enabling Conditions: A number of enabling conditions appear to be necessary to achieve critical mass and corporate identity.

a. The first is administrative support from the university. In theuniversities studied for this project administrative support was essential for initial organization and planning of units of this type. In the face of administrative hostility toward such projects their creation is virtually impossible. F urthermore, higher administration can be important in a number of more positive ways - initiating

or coordinating planning, securing space, making small initial contributions of resources. In some cases, administration representatives can be important in initiating discussions with foundations and other outside agencies for support, or entering discussions with such agencies at crucial points.

b. The second is financial support. Without relatively reliable financial support nothing is possible, obviously. Substantial financial support acts as a magnet for faculty and students, who realize that support from a particular unit may help them advance their own research programs. Generally, research unit leadership understandably prefers programmatic as opposed to project support. They prefer, that is, a bloc of funds which can be used at the discretion of unit leadership over a period of years (say, three to five) to support locally initiated projects which fall within the programmatic definition within which the unit works.

The least popular form of support in these units is individual project support, which, as has often been noted, makes for an unstable over-all financial situation, and makes it necessary to spend considerable time and energy in search for support. This kind of support, as a policy followed by outside agencies, is probably self-defeating, at least if one of the goals of such support is maintenance of an organized research context which is assumed to more reliably produce good research over a reasonably long period of time than would support to individuals.

c. Space: A single location which permits easy access of researchers to each other is probably important.

Totman

Probably because no effort was made here to try to isolate the effects of proximity of researchers to each other on research production. But such proximity is clearly felt by most individuals involved in such units to be very important in producing important, though intangible benefits.

d, Leadership and "Management"

Leadership is the single most important resource in making such units successful. Without intelligent leadership substantial financial resources will only be inefficiently used and generally will not produce satisfactory results.

Individuals who lead such units must be relatively senior persons with an established research record which commands respect from their peers and their juniors, and a widely ramified network of associations in the university and in the wider professional community. Such individuals stand at the apex of university status hierarchies and can thus undertake the necessary exercises in politics and diplomacy necessary to develop and sustain a successful research program in such a unit.

High status, though necessary, is not sufficient in and of itself to make such units work successfully. The individuals who run such units must lead in every sense of the word.

They must aggressively take the initiative in recruiting staff and in initiating projects when that is necessary (which often amoungs to the same thing). As a general rule, this is a supremely difficult task. It is difficult because it means that not only must projects be defined which straddle disciplinary and problem area needs, but individuals must

be found in the university, or outside it, who are free of other commitments and can be persuaded to undertake a project. These tasks entail thorough familiarity with both disciplinary and practical or problem area situations, and thorough knowledge of individual faculty interests, aptitudes and personal research situations. Usually such project initiation is a subtle task achieved not so much through direct suggestion, but indirectly in personal interaction with individuals over a relatively lengthy time. When one is deeply set in a colleague work group knowledge of individual interests can generate informally and gradually, almost imperceptibly, project conceptions. Thus, the line between aggressive initiation by leadership and spontaneous generation of research projects and pathways becomes blurred and difficult to ascertain.

In cases where unit leadership does not undertake to initiate projects it must be able to allocate funds to projects which fit wellwithin the programmatic research mission of the unit. In order to do this, some of the same skills as those just described are needed.

Funds must be allocated among competing projects without damaging egos. Good political relations with departments and with higher administrative levels must be maintained. This often involves exchanges of favors of a delicate nature. A summer salary may be provided, for instance, for a faculty member who is petitioning a dean for such support in return for supporting released time for another faculty member from the same unit so he can participate in the research unit's program. Maintenance of such essentially political support can facilitate major accomplishments on the part of the unit director. Such good relations might ease the way to achieving

faculty status for a talented research associate more strongly associated with the goals of the unit than with the goals of the other, tenure granting unit who would otherwise be forced to leave the university.

"Management" is, as a general rule, not a word well-received by academics when used to mean self-conscious organization and administration of personnel and resources at this level of individual researchers or groups of researchers in the university setting. At this level in the university, there do not appear to be administrative principles, of the sort underlying management decisions in more bureaucratic organizations, followed by unit research directors. Research is widely understood to be a difficult, chancy, unpredictable and highly individualistic process. At this point jn this project, the single most important aspect of "management" which influences research production appears to be the subtle leadership role just described.

e. Critical Mass and Corporate Identity

Critical mass refers to the mustering of sufficient tangible and intangible resources to allow a corporate identity to develop and continuous and high-quality research production to occur.

Small initial investments of money and energy may lead to enough publications or research reports to generate more money from outside supporting organizations, may attract more staff, develop technical and secretarial support services, and data resources. Increases in such resources facilitate further publications or useful research reports. A reputation for productivity begins to develop.

Funding agencies, attracted by the developing corporate

identity, feel confident that investment of funds will pay off in high-quality research.

Faculty feel that association with the unit will enhance their own ability to produce good research. Funds are available. Data resources and technical services are available. Colleagues who can assist through criticism and moral support the progress of others' work are available. Access to outside agencies and organizations the cooperation of which are necessary to accomplish field work is made possible by the contacts which can be provided through unit auspices.

At some point in this process, corporate effects begin to be felt. That is, the unit itself, as distinguished from individuals affiliated with it, develops a reputation and identity. At that point,, individuals in outside organizations and in the university are attracted to the unit itself rather than individuals in it. A continuous production of high-quality, interesting, and useful research becomes possible as staff routinely turn over.